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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN 00834

SINGAPORE FOR USDAO - COL SHORT

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: MARR PREL BX
SUBJECT: ADMIRAL HARDISTY'S MEETING WITH SULTAN OF BRUNEI

REF: (A) BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN 786 (B) STATE 331452

11. CONFIDENTIAL ENTIRE TEXT.

12. SUMMARY: USCINCPAC ADMIRAL HARDISTY MET WITH SULTAN OF BRUNEI 21 NOV TO DISCUSS PROSPECTS FOR MODEST EXPANSION OF U.S.-BRUNEI MILITARY RELATIONS. OTHER TOPICS COVERED WERE PHILIPPINE BASE NEGOTIATIONS, U.S.-SINGAPORE AGREEMENT, SULTAN'S VISIT TO U.S. AIRCRAFT CARRIER, AND GULF CRISIS. END SUMMARY.

13. USCINCPAC ADMIRAL HARDISTY CALLED ON SULTAN OF BRUNEI 21 NOV, ACCCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR PHILLIPS, USCINCPAC FOREIGN POLICY ADVISOR KILLION AND NOTETAKER. BRUNEI CHIEF OF ARMED FORCES STAFF MGEN SULAIMAN WAS PRESENT.

14. AFTER SULTAN'S WELCOME, ADMIRAL HARDISTY SAID HE APPRECIATED OPPORTUNITY TO MEET AGAIN AFTER LAST CALL IN AUG 1989. ADMIRAL REVIEWED HIS RECENT DISCUSSIONS IN MANILA WITH MILITARY AND POLITICAL LEADERS, INCLUDING FOREIGN SECRETARY MANGLAPUS AND PRESIDENT AQUINO WHO HAD ASKED HIM TO CONVEY GREETINGS TO THE SULTAN. THE ADMIRAL NOTED THAT PRESIDENT AQUINO WAS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR A NEW BASES AGREEMENT SATISFACTORY TO BOTH SIDES.

15. THE SULTAN SAID HE WAS VERY HAPPY TO HEAR ABOUT THE GOOD PROSPECTS FOR A BASES AGREEMENT. HE SAID HE HAD MET WITH MANGLAPUS AT THE TOKYO ENTHRONEMENT CEREMONIES TO DISCUSS REGIONAL ISSUES, AND ALSO NOTED TOKYO SIGNING OF A SINGAPORE-U.S. FACILITIES AGREEMENT BY VICE PRESIDENT QUAYLE FND P.M. LEE KUAN YEW. ADMIRAL HARDISTY REPLIED THAT THE MODERATE INCREASE IN U.S. PRESENCE AND ACTIVITIES IN SINGAPORE WILL DEMONSTRATE OUR INTEREST AND COMMITMENT TO THE REGION, AND COMPLEMENT, WITHOUT IN ANY WAY REPLACING, FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN THE PHILIPPINES.

16. THE SULTAN STATED THAT BRUNEI WOULD BE HAPPY TO ALLOW THE U.S. NAVY AND AIR FORCE GREATER ACCESS TO BRUNEI FACILITIES. ADMIRAL HARDISTY DREW ON DEPARTMENT'S TALKING POINTS FOR RESPONSE (REFTELS). HE NOTED THAT A MODEST INCREASE IN OUR EXERCISE AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES WOULD BE APPROPRIATE AND IN OUR MUTUAL BEST INTERESTS. SULTAN INDICATED HIS UNDERSTANDING, BUT DID NOT PURSUE DISCUSSION. (SEE SEPTEL ON ADMIRAL HARDISTY MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER FOR DETAILS ON BRUNEI'S RESPONSE.)

17. THE SULTAN ASKED ABOUT U.S. PLANS FOR FUTURE FORCE LEVEL REDUCTIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES. ADMIRAL

HARDISTY OUTLINED CURRENT PROJECTIONS, INCLUDING OUR FUTURE WITHDRAWAL OF THE FIGHTER SQUADRONS FROM CLARK, AND THE OUTLOOK FOR CLARK AND SUBIC IN TERMS OF OUR ON-GOING TALKS WITH THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES. HE REVIEWED NUNN-WARNER REDUCTIONS THROUGHOUT THE REGION AND INDICATED THE REDUCTIONS WERE BASED ON THE NEW STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT. HE THEN ASSURED THE SULTAN THE U.S. INTENDED TO RETAIN A FORWARD PRESENCE FOR OUR BENEFIT AS WELL AS THAT OF OUR FRIENDS AND ALLIES. THE SULTAN STRESSED THAT U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IS STILL OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO BRUNEI, TO ASEAN, AND TO MOST NATIONS OF THE REGION.

¶18. SHIFTING TO THE GULF CRISIS, ADMIRAL HARDISTY REFERRED TO U.S. DECISION TO CONTINUE OUR BUILD-UP. THE U.S. WELCOMED BRUNEI'S INITIATIVE TOGETHER WITH SINGAPORE IN PROVIDING RELIEF SUPPLIES AND OTHER ASSISTANCE TO TRAPPED REFUGEES, AS WELL AS BRUNEI'S CONDEMNATION OF IRAQ AND CONTINUED STRONG SUPPORT FOR UN SANCTIONS. THE SULTAN SAID BRUNEI'S COURSE WAS CLEAR IN THIS CRISIS, AND WAS CONCERNED THE SITUATION LOOKED INCREASINGLY DANGEROUS.

¶19. ADMIRAL HARDISTY NOTED THAT ON HIS LAST VISIT THE SULTAN HAD EXPRESSED INTEREST IN AGAIN FLYING OUT TO VISIT A U.S. AIRCRAFT CARRIER OFF BRUNEI. UNFORTUNATELY, WITH DESERT SHIELD IT WAS A PROBLEM FOR ONE OF OUR CARRIERS TO COME IN CLOSE ENOUGH FOR THE SULTAN TO FLY HIS OWN BLACKHAWK HELICOPTER, WHICH LIMITED THE TRIP TO ABOUT 100 MILES OFF-SHORE. IF FLYING OUT IN ONE OF OUR PLANES WAS NOT DESIRABLE (ARRESTED LANDINGS/CATAPULT LAUNCHES DO NOT APPEAL TO THE SULTAN), WE WOULD CONTINUE TO TRY TO WORK SOMETHING OUT.

¶10. STRESSING OUR CORDIAL BILATERAL RELATIONS, THE SULTAN CLOSED THE MEETING BY ASSURING ADMIRAL HARDISTY OF A WARM WELCOME ANY TIME HE MIGHT CHOOSE TO VISIT BRUNEI IN THE FUTURE. ADMIRAL HARDISTY IN TURN RESPONDED BY COMPLIMENTING THE SULTAN ON THE EXCELLENT SHAPE OF BRUNEI'S ARMED FORCES--A FORCE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AND NATION-BUILDING.

¶11. ADMIRAL HARDISTY HAS APPROVED THIS MESSAGE.

WOJTASIEWICZ